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THE FAITHFUL SERVANT CROWNED :

A Sermon

ON OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF THE

REV. WILLIAM T. DWIGHT, D. D.

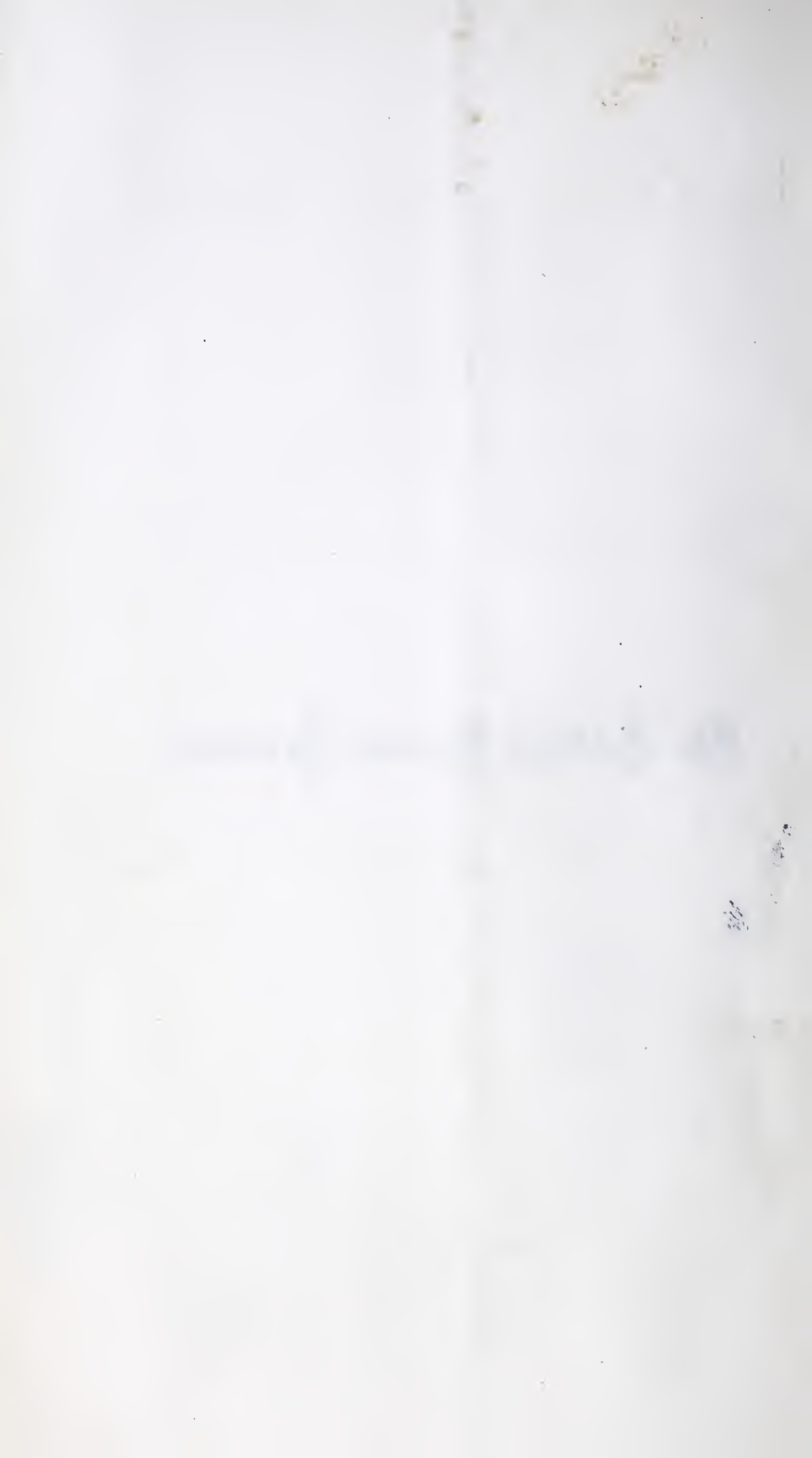
PREACHED IN THE TENTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA,

ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1865.

BY HENRY A. BOARDMAN, D. D.



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THE FAITHFUL SERVANT

BY J. H. B. B. B.



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THE FAITHFUL SERVANT CROWNED.

—REVELATION, 2: 10—

BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH, AND I WILL GIVE THEE A
CROWN OF LIFE.

THESE Epistles to the Seven Churches of Asia, all speak of a conflict: and each has a special promise of reward “to him that overcometh.” Most of them commingle praise and blame; the former preponderating in some cases, the latter in others. Smyrna is honorably distinguished among these churches, in that no fault whatever is laid at its door. The Epistle inscribed to it, contains nothing but commendation. It speaks, however, of trials and sufferings; and closes with the cheering promise, “BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH, AND I WILL GIVE THEE A CROWN OF LIFE.”

These Epistles are addressed to the “angels,” *i. e.* the ministers of these several churches. The prime application is, of course, to them. But not to them exclusively. The messages pertain to the membership generally; and, after them, to all disciples in all ages. The Master virtually says to every minister and every private Christian what he said to the Church of Smyrna. And it concerns us all to know what this language means.

“Be thou *faithful* unto death.” “Faithful” to whom? “faithful” to what?

Every thoughtful man must sometimes ask himself the question, “How came I to be in this world? and for

what end am I here?" The practical answer which this question receives from men in general is, "I am here to do as I list: to seek my own objects, and enjoy life as I best may." This is the feeling of every heart until we are taught better. But it is an atheistic doctrine. The true doctrine is, that the creature belongs to the Creator; that God has placed us here for His purposes, not ours; that He claims our supreme love and homage; and that to refuse this claim, is to draw down his displeasure upon us.

Every man has received from God a certain trust; and fidelity to this trust is the law of his being. I say, "every man;" for no exception can be allowed. It is of God that every human being is endowed with his proper capacities—his one, or two, or five talents. God assigns to all their respective countries and periods. He appoints their occupations. He prescribes their course of life. He presides over their various plans, their surroundings, their successes, their reverses, and everything that concerns them.

It must be so. To restrict His control to a few superior classes, and to great events, would soon bring on an universal chaos. There could be neither society nor government. There is the same necessity for his minute control over the peasant as the prince; over the laborer as the statesman. And the same obligation rests upon all to acknowledge His sovereignty.

But this path would lead us into too broad a field. Let us keep within the sacred enclosure of the Church, and inquire what meaning the exhortation of the text carries with it in its application to the family of believers—or more specifically still, to the Christian Ministry.

Faithfulness here includes, as its first element, *self-*

consecration. It begins in a renunciation of the world—a renunciation of every false god. “Other lords beside Thee have had dominion over us; but by Thee only will we make mention of Thy name.” This is the feeling—a disowning of all fealty except to the living and true God. How absolute that usurped supremacy is, which “other lords” have asserted over the soul, must be known to every one who has been delivered from it. It would not consort with the limits of the present discourse, to enlarge upon the modes and implements by which the deliverance is effected. Let it suffice, that the dominion of sin in the heart is too firmly established to be overthrown by any skill or prowess of our own: that the only arm which can achieve it, is the arm that broke the fetters of Egyptian bondage, and clave the Red Sea for the passage of Israel: and that even under His guardianship, his people do not ordinarily escape without a protracted and fearful struggle. Escape they do, however. Penitent and grateful, they cast themselves at the feet of their Deliverer, and dedicate their all to His service. His blood and righteousness becomes the sole foundation of their hope. His word they own as their law. They take His yoke upon them, and humbly engage to hear, henceforth, no voice but His.

This union with Christ consummated, it is of the essence of fidelity to their trust, that they habitually recognise themselves as no longer their own, but bought with a price, even with the precious blood of the Son of God. It is one of the favorite titles by which the apostles love to designate themselves, “a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.” Paul, Peter, Jude, and John, all agree in this. The great Apostle of the Gentiles interweaves the idea with all his Epistles—“*whose I am and whom I*

serve." This was not only the badge he wore upon his breast; but the talisman enshrined in his heart. There was nothing in which he gloried more, than in the assurance, "My beloved is mine and I am His." And in his measure, this is the feeling of every true disciple. How, otherwise, can one be a true disciple? There must needs be a cherished purpose to "know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified;" a sincere desire to become more like him, and to have every plan and motive brought into subjection to His will. A deep sense of unworthiness and of failure there will always be: a consciousness of the broad disparity there is between the promise and the performance, between the actual attainments of the soul in piety, and its perfect Exemplar. But this will rather foster than enervate its longings after a "closer walk with God," and a more complete baptism of the Spirit. "I count not myself to have attained: but this one thing I do, I press toward the mark." He is faithful who does this: who keeps his eye upon his Master; yearns to be like him; strives to follow him; and counts every thing but loss in comparison with his approbation.

As this is among the first and most obvious elements of Christian faithfulness, so is it one of its most difficult parts. "*Take heed to thyself.*" "*Keep thine heart with all diligence.*" Our religion lays upon us no requisition more difficult, none more indispensable, than this. Fidelity here makes every other duty simple and easy. For we have no hinderances elsewhere to contend with, comparable to those to be found in our own hearts. And when the heart is right, a Christian feels scarcely any thing to be a burden; or heeds any peril; or pauses at any obstacle. Rather is he disposed to say with the apostle, "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in

necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong."

Again, considered with a special reference to the ministry, faithfulness includes *the steadfast maintenance of the truth*. This was clearly intended in the counsels addressed to these seven churches. Even at that early period error had come into the Church like a flood. Most of the Apostolic Epistles were written to confute false doctrines. Timothy and Titus are fully warned in the letters inscribed to them, of the heresies they will have to encounter. And from that day to this, the same thing has been going on: where the servants of God have sown wheat, false teachers have scattered tares. Satan has accomplished far more by corrupting the doctrines of Christianity, than by open violence against the Church—precisely as a city suffers more by having its wells poisoned, than by the most furious assaults upon its walls.

It is, therefore, one of the prime functions of the ministry, to conserve the truth. In that eloquent protestation of St. Paul just before his martyrdom, he specifies as one of the sources of his comfort, that he had "*kept the faith*." And every one who is called into the ministry, must do the same. This embraces the diligent study of the Scriptures—that he may be "thoroughly furnished unto every good work."

It embraces the faithful preaching of the truth. He must preach the whole truth. "All Scripture is profitable," and he must not "shun to declare the whole counsel of God." "Rightly to divide it, so as to give to each his portion in due season," may require a wise discrimination and a devout spirit. But nothing of doctrine or precept, of threatening or promise, must be kept back, which will be profitable to the hearers.

Nor must the ministry shrink from vindicating the truth as against every form of error. In itself considered, theological controversy is a serious evil. It often exposes men to reproach. It leads to the sundering of friendships. It may embroil a community in strife. But one who is set for the defence of the Gospel, has no alternative. If the doctrines of grace are impugned, he must defend them. If the people around him are imbibing heretical sentiments, he must warn them of their danger. It runs in his commission: "Hold fast the form of sound words:" "Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine: for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears."

This duty is imperative. But it is a delicate and difficult office: and he who would go through with it successfully, must give great heed to the temper and manner in which he undertakes it. Here is his lesson on this point:—"The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth." Firmness in exposing and rebuking error, with the utmost charity and tenderness in dealing with those who have been ensnared by error:—this is the Master's prescription, and if a minister would be "faithful," he must conform to it.

We have seen what faithfulness on the part of the ministry includes in respect to the culture of *personal piety*, and the *maintenance of the truth*. Its concern with the *care of souls* is too apparent to require any extended elucidation.

This is the business of the ministry. It is incorporated in the names they bear, as bishops or overseers, pastors, messengers of God, ambassadors for Christ. It is the sum of their commission: "disciple all nations." It is the work to which they are set apart—the noblest, the most benevolent, the most useful of all callings, that of saving souls. Fidelity here imports an entire dedication of their talents, time, and influence, to the high trust they have received. There must be unwearied study in preparing for the public ministration of the word. The people have a right to be fed with knowledge and with understanding; and if they relieve their pastor, as they are bound to do and as they engage to do, from anxiety and distraction of mind about his worldly affairs, he will greatly wrong them and sin against his Master, if he habitually fail to take beaten oil into the sanctuary. Nor this alone. He must be skilful in devising ways and modes of reaching their hearts and winning them to Christ. All his studies, his opportunities of self-culture, his recreations, must be made tributary to their good. His resources of every kind must be pressed into the service. And he must not be satisfied unless he sees them turning to God. It were well, indeed, if he could say as holy Rutherford said to his flock: "My witness is above, that your heaven would be two heavens to me, and your salvation as two salvations to me."

One other element enters vitally into the Scriptural conception of a faithful minister, viz.: *constancy in the presence of trouble and suffering*. This, as already hinted, is the primary idea of the text: "Be thou *faithful unto death*." The path along which ministers are led is not always a smooth path. Of like passions with other men, they must expect to share the chequered lot of the race

at large. Besides this, there are difficulties peculiar to their vocation which few escape. Not unfrequently they are the victims of great unkindness—of ingratitude, reproach, and obloquy. And sometimes they are brought face to face with persecution, and even with death itself, merely for the truth's sake. These emergencies are sufficiently trying even to men who have taken up the cross to follow Christ. But there is only one way of meeting them. St. Paul has shown us what that is: "The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." And thus will every "faithful" minister cleave to his Master even unto death.

Bishop KEN'S beautiful portraiture of such a minister comprises all this, and much more:

"Give me the priest these graces shall possess:
Of an ambassador the first address;
A father's tenderness; a shepherd's care;
A leader's courage which the cross can bear;
A ruler's awe; a watchman's wakeful eye;
A pilot's skill the helm in storms to ply;
A fisher's patience, and a laborer's toil;
A guide's dexterity to disembroil;
A prophet's inspiration from above;
A teacher's knowledge, and a Saviour's love."

With this very meagre account of what enters into the New Testament idea of faithfulness on the part of the Christian ministry, I pass on to notice the promise contained in the second clause of the text: "Be thou

faithful unto death, and *I will give thee a crown of life.*”

The allusion evidently is to the prize prescribed in the ancient games, which was a crown (in different games) of wild-olive, of parsley, of pine, or of laurel. So the reward promised to the victor in the Christian warfare is, variously, a crown of righteousness, a crown of glory, a crown of life. The image is very expressive. A crown is symbolical of dignity, rank, and power. “A crown of life” is a living crown: not like the diadems of earthly princes, fragile and perishable, but indestructible. Nay, more: it imparts life to the brow which it adorns. An immortal crown communicating immortality to the wearer, to be worn forever—never to decay, never to grow dim, never to become a burden, never to be transferred to any other head. Such a crown is emblematic of true royalty, of a kingdom worthy the name, whose foundations are sure, whose thrones rest upon the attributes of God as their pillars, whose soil no hostile feet shall ever tread, whose atmosphere no hostile breath shall ever pollute, whose peace shall never be invaded, whose perfect fellowship shall never end. In a word, this crown represents that unbounded affluence of delights and honors, which the sacred penmen have elsewhere set forth under such images as a house of many mansions; a paradise supplying all manner of precious fruits; a city with foundations built by God himself; an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading; an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. In one particular, indeed, the crown differs from all these: it is a personal dignity. The others present to us the blessed community of the faithful; their social state; the honors they share in partnership. The “crown” pertains to the individual.

“Be *thou* faithful; I will give *thee* a crown of life.” It seems to denote a more endearing relation between Christ and his servant; a more minute and gracious oversight on the part of the Saviour; a peculiar nearness and intimacy of fellowship; a specific exaltation, as something significant of a direct, personal approval of the believer’s faithfulness. “Thou shalt have a crown in testimony not merely of the favor I bear to my people in general, but of the love and honor in which I hold *thee*.”

This crown is to be a gift: “I will *give* thee.” We need not insist upon this emphasis as the only proper exposition of the promise. But it is a thoroughly Scriptural idea, and we do no violence to the passage by recognizing it here. The victor’s crown comes to him, not of debt, but of grace; not by any desert of his own, but solely through the merit of his Lord. Everything pertaining to the “faithfulness” of which it is the reward, is of grace. His deliverance from the blindness and bondage of nature, his investiture with the sacred office, his talents, his station, his means and opportunities of doing good, his successes, his strength for the toils of the way, his peace and hope, his courage and constancy, his perseverance to the end, and final triumph — of all this he might say, of all this he will say: “Not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” And therefore will he adore the same matchless grace in the crown with which his humble labors are requited.

One other circumstance is mentioned here, and it is just the one thing needed to invest this crown with its highest possible value; *it will be presented by Christ himself*: “I will give thee a crown of life.”

Here is a transaction we cannot compass. It belongs to the last day. It contemplates an assembled universe.

There, in the presence of all the generations of men, of angels, and of devils, the faithful disciple will be brought forth from his seclusion, to hear himself proclaimed by the Judge of quick and dead as one that had been "faithful unto death;" and to receive from those hands which were once nailed to the cross, a crown of life. Who shall describe the rapture of that hour? What pen may essay to depict the joy of that ransomed sinner, upon whom the King of Kings accumulates these exalted honors? The theme would demand an angel's tongue. Not until we witness, shall we be able to frame any suitable conception of it.

Not to enlarge upon this interesting topic, let us note a very few of the practical inferences suggested by the Scripture before us.

1. We have here the familiar idea of *the Christian life as a warfare*. This thought pervades the Seven Epistles, as it also runs through the discourses of our Saviour and the writings of the Apostles. Everywhere it is taken for granted that heaven is to be reached only as the result of a conflict. No hint meets the eye that the aversion of Satan and the world to Christianity is a mere superficial and evanescent prejudice. Rather is it delineated as a principle of hostility, deep-seated, malignant, and abiding. In its manifestations it is endlessly diversified. But its essential spirit is the same in all ages and countries. It crucified the Messiah, and where it has the power it persecutes his disciples. Left to itself, it would sweep every vestige of His religion from the earth. One of the mercies which challenge our gratitude is, that we live in a day when it is held in check. But it still reaches us, for it works both in and around us. Our living in a land of religious liberty does not exempt us

from this warfare. If we have yet to learn this, it behoves us to inquire whether our Christianity be anything more than a name. Certainly every true believer has found that he is withstood at every step of his way heavenward, and that he cannot lay aside his armor for one hour without suffering for it.

While this is true of all Christians, it applies with peculiar force to ministers of the gospel. There are obvious reasons why the special enmity of the world should be directed against them. And the heavier the blows they deal out at the usurped supremacy of Satan, the more confidently may they be expected to encounter his malevolent attacks, whether in the form of open detraction, of downright violence, or of secret snares and pitfalls. There can be no minister of Christ, no private Christian, who does not need the exhortation, "Be thou faithful unto death." But,

2. *There is great comfort here* for those engaged in this conflict. *The Master's eye* is upon them. His language implies this: "Be thou faithful, and I will reward thee." Nay, he specifies (in the case of Smyrna) the very troubles that awaited them: "The devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days." His people are never out of His sight. Or, if He could avert His eyes from them for a moment, it would not be like Him to do this when they are in affliction. He has drank too deeply of the cup of sorrow, and knows too well the value of sympathy.

And what an encouragement is it to the suffering disciple, to remember that his Lord is looking upon him. You have all proved this under the ordinary calamities of life, its sicknesses, its bereavements, its reverses. And what it has been to you, it has been also to His faithful

ministers in their peculiar trials — as when they have had to struggle with poverty ; when failing health has driven them from their work ; when they have toiled long without seeing any fruit of their labors ; when (to assimilate the case more nearly to the lesson of the text) their honest and vigilant efforts for the good of souls have been repaid with a pitiless indifference or positive unkindness ; or when a conscientious discharge of duty has brought upon them a storm of detraction and abuse. Yes, many a minister of Christ has, on occasions like these, sought and found strength and peace in the reflection that his Master's eye was upon him, and His arm round about him.

Nor in this thought alone : The bright promise has cheered them, “ I will give thee *a crown of life*.” Appealing from the present to the future, from earth to heaven, His injured and sorrowing servants nerve themselves to the patient endurance of their wrongs, by the prospect of that immortal crown. The Master indulges them in this feeling. Some excellent and able theologians, assuming to speak in His name, have branded all reference to a future reward as vitiating the obedience flowing from it. The Saviour did not share in their notions of disinterested fidelity. He was not afraid of a virtue which contemplated as well the happiness of the servant as the glory of his Lord. He constantly appeals to the universal craving after happiness, and holds out to men the blessings of pardon and salvation as *motives* to repentance and a holy life. And (as in the text) He comforts His people in their sorrows, by pointing them to the land where sorrow is unknown. Sweet consolation it is to them. What could the tempted, the bereaved, the calumniated, the oppressed, the suffering do, were it not for

the coming glory ? “I will give thee a crown of life.” This is enough. If their faith can only grasp it, it will sustain them under any burden, reconcile them to any privation, and soothe them under any affliction ; for,

“ Earth has no sorrow
Which Heaven cannot heal.”

3. And this suggests the further reflection, that this Scripture *may well console us under the loss of our Christian friends, and of faithful ministers of the Gospel.*

We miss them here. We feel the sad void caused by their departure. We mourn the sundering of those ties which bound them to our hearts. We must mourn ; nature demands, and grace approves it. But we do not mourn for them. Rather do we rejoice in their triumph. We look up and see them *crowned* — and we are satisfied. That “CROWN OF LIFE” — we ask no more. Its splendors dazzle us. It taxes our faith to believe that the Master has actually put it upon that poor aching head we so often soothed with our feeble but loving ministry. We cannot well realize that the friend who but yesterday sat at our board, the sharer alike of our infirmities and our trials, and the object of our tender affection, now walks among that regal throng enrobed and jewelled as for a coronation pageant. We recall that humble servant of Jesus Christ who, for many years, through evil and through good report, preached the gospel of the kingdom and labored to save perishing sinners, and it seems to exceed belief that he has gone up among the shining seraphim, and now stands before the throne wearing a diadem of glory. But it is even so. With such munificence does our exalted Lord requite the poor, inconstant, sin-stained services of his people. They were “faithful unto

death:" and they shall not fail, the lowliest and unwor-thiest among them, of "a crown of life." Much less shall they fail of this glorious recompense, who have borne the banner of the cross through a long life in the high places of the field, and laid it down only when He summoned them home to their reward.

Indulge me while I say a few words of one of these faithful standard-bearers, lately gone to receive his "crown of life."

Less than a month has elapsed since you listened to a sermon from this pulpit, on the covenant-faithfulness of God in his gracious dealings with the families of be-lievers—a topic which was illustrated by an express reference to the family of President EDWARDS. It was observed, among other things, that there were now living, descendants of this illustrious man, who could retrace their Christian birthright through ten generations of pious ancestors—and how much farther did not appear. I little thought that another link in this golden chain was so soon—to be broken, shall I say? No, rather let me say, transferred from earth to heaven. I speak of the late Rev. WILLIAM T. DWIGHT, D. D., whose welcome voice you have repeatedly heard in this house, pleading with you to let no man take *your* crown.

It is not my purpose to attempt a full portraiture of this excellent man, or to enter into the details of his biography. I simply desire to pay a brief tribute to his memory.

Springing, as just intimated, from a line of ancestry doubly enriched with the gifts of intellect and of grace, he was the sixth son, and, at his death, the last surviving child of the late President DWIGHT, of New Haven. He was born at Greenfield Hill, Connecticut, in 1795, a few

months before his father accepted the Presidency of Yale College. He graduated with honor at Yale, in the class of 1813; was a tutor there for two years, and in 1819 came to this city, and entered, as a student of law, the office of the late CHARLES CHAUNCEY, Esq., then, and to the period of his death, one of the great lights of the Philadelphia Bar. After the usual term of study he was admitted to the Bar, and continued in the practice of his profession for about ten years. In 1831, attending upon the ministry of the Rev. Dr. SKINNER, at the Arch street church, it pleased God to lead him into the way of life. So exemplary had been his conduct, and so punctilious his observance of all the outward duties of religion, that it was commonly supposed he had long been a professing Christian. He reached this point, however, only through a conflict of terrible severity. "A fiercer tumult of feeling (says an intimate friend of whom he sought daily counsel,) it has never been my lot to witness, than that of which his bosom was the theatre for some two or three weeks." Precisely the discipline which God has appointed to many a man whom he designed for eminent usefulness in the Church. Emerging at length from the gloom and terror of this fiery ordeal, he found a corresponding "peace in believing." Confessing Christ soon after, he conferred not with flesh and blood, but dedicated himself to the ministry of reconciliation. Standing where we do to-day, is there any one present who has the slightest misgiving as to the wisdom of this exchange? Allowing that he might have won the chief honors and emoluments of the Bar, and written his name high among the distinguished jurists of the land, could the retrospect of his labors have afforded his friends the satisfaction they feel *now*; or the results of his life be

weighed against those which will now follow him to his reward? A few months after his ordination to the ministry, he became (1832) the Pastor of the Third Congregational Church in Portland, Me., and remained in that position down to the fall of '63, when he resigned his charge.

Bound to our city not only by his early professional associations, but by the most sacred of domestic ties, it was his custom to spend a few weeks here every autumn. On these visits he frequently did me the favor to occupy my pulpit. The last occasions on which we had the privilege of listening to him were in April last, when he delivered an address, on a Sabbath afternoon, concerning our national bereavement; and on the following Sabbath evening, (April 30th,) when he preached an excellent sermon from Heb. xi. 27: "He endured as seeing Him who is invisible."

You will readily recall his person and bearing. I shall not violate the proprieties of the place and day, if I say that nature had endowed him with features of a classic mould, which beamed with mingled intelligence and benignity; and that a face which would anywhere have arrested attention, unfurrowed by the lapse of threescore years and ten, derived an added charm from that "hoary head," which, in this case certainly, was felt by every one to be "a crown of glory." As in keeping with such a presence, his manner in the pulpit, and his carriage in society, were marked with that sort of blended grace and dignity which we instinctively refer to a past generation. It came to our fathers under the old *regime*, from the courtly circles of Europe, and was one of those refined and refining elements which might have been retained without detriment to our republican civilization. But it

was one of the least of Dr. DWIGHT's merits, that he stood in this respect as a connecting link between us and our progenitors.

Inheriting a strong and well-balanced mind, his original powers had been developed and matured under the best systems of education known to our country. To the highest range of academic culture he superadded the various learning, the thorough mental discipline, and the knowledge of the world, proper to the Legal profession. These opulent endowments were again supplemented and elevated by the patient study of the Word of God; an habitual converse with those themes, at once the most sublime and the most momentous to which the human mind can be directed; and the daily exercise of functions which bring into play the best affections and most sacred sympathies of the soul. He passed among men of mark, as a vigorous thinker and acute logician, a man cautious and discriminating in forming his opinions, and eminently tenacious and resolute in maintaining them.

Over all his powers and accomplishments there presided an inflexible conscientiousness. When he came into the church and the ministry, he kept nothing back. So profound was his sense of the Divine mercy which had rescued him from ruin, so irresistible the constraining love of Christ which drew him to the cross, that the feeling with which he gave himself up in the first instance seemed never to leave him.

“ Dear Lord, a sinner's heart receive,
This burdened, contrite heart of mine;
Thou know'st I've nought beside to give,
And let it be forever thine.”

He never fell below this ; to get beyond it was impossible. He laid his all at the Saviour's feet. Into every department of his ministry he carried the sentiment, "What wilt THOU have me to do?" Unswervingly true to his own convictions, no one ever suspected him of finesse or worldly policy. Faithful to the Master he served, he so "walked with God" in the practice of a devout and consistent piety, that it might justly have been said of him, he

"Allured to brighter worlds, and *led the way.*"

His public ministrations took their type from his early profession. While his manner was dignified, earnest, and impressive, he addressed himself rather to the reason than to the affections. Those who were admitted to the interior circle of his friendships, detected a depth and tenderness in his emotional nature, of which, to a stranger's eye, his outward mien gave little token. But his chosen implement in the pulpit was logic. He aimed to convince the understanding by sober argument, clothed in polished diction ; not, however, (as *we* can bear witness,) to the exclusion of earnest and pungent appeals to the consciences of his hearers.

A ministry like this, continued for upwards of thirty years, could not fail of yielding generous fruits. We are in no situation to define its large proportions, much less to gather up its results. That it should have involved some painful trials, was a thing of course ; for when did a pastorate of thirty years escape them ? Enough that He who holds the stars in His right hand never withdrew *His* arm from his worn and wearied servant ; and that in "the cloudy and dark day," he found the sanctuary for which he yearned, in his Master's unfailing

sympathy. When at last the issues of that laborious ministry come to be disclosed, it will doubtless appear that these very trials helped to multiply the golden sheaves which the bending reaper will carry home to his Lord.

It would not consist with the limits of this discourse, to consider Dr. DWIGHT in his relations to the Church at large. Let it suffice that he was one of the guides and leaders of the Congregational body. His presence was constantly sought on those ecclesiastical "Councils" which the exigencies of that precarious system have devised as a substitute for Presbyteries and Synods. He was appointed to various posts of honor and influence; and held for many years the Presidency of that highly important Board, the "Visitors" of the Andover Theological Seminary. In a word, all New England was familiar with his name, and justly associated with it the ideas of great personal purity, soundness of judgment, Christian courtesy, candor, and courage; and a hearty devotion to the cause and kingdom of the Redeemer.

But we must hasten to the closing scene. Two years ago Dr. DWIGHT met with a sad bereavement in the loss of his wife, a native of our city, and a lady whose character presented a rare combination of warm sensibilities, intelligence, firmness, and piety. Of an ardent temperament, her bright and hopeful spirit supplied a happy counterpoise to the somewhat despondent tendency of his own nature: while her genial sympathy sustained and cheered him in every part of his work. Her death produced a marked impression upon his health. In the early part of the past summer, he was prostrated by a severe malady, which, after months of intense suffering, terminated in his death, on Sunday evening, October 22d.

He died at Andover, Massachusetts, surrounded by his children, whose grateful office it had been to solace his illness with their tender and unwearied ministry of affection.

An eye-witness thus describes the end:

“Dr. DWIGHT’S friends will be glad to know that his last hours were those of entire consciousness, and of Christian peace and happiness. The mind, long weakened and clouded by disease, reasserted its supremacy, so that for hours before death came he was able, calmly and sweetly, to bear witness to the sustaining power of Jesus’ presence. He recognized his children, and was perfectly conscious of his condition. His thoughts were on the promises — and texts of Scripture were evidently passing through his mind — from words which he occasionally expressed with audible emphasis:— ‘Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,’ &c., and a part of that beautiful lyric, ‘Guide me, oh, thou great Jehovah!’ Among his last utterances were: ‘I die! I go to be with Jesus!’ or words of similar import. About twenty minutes before death, the countenance beamed with an expression of surprise and heavenly radiance, as if the spirit was permitted to have a glimpse of the New City before it entered its sacred gates, and passed to that land where there is no night.”

I have purposely abstained from any reference to Dr. DWIGHT’S home-life. I care not to invade the sanctity of that scene so long irradiated by his presence, and now so desolate by his absence. That bereaved household know where to look for consolation. “A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children’s children.” The legacy which has come down through ten generations will not fail *them* — and has not failed them. All its treasures are laid open to them. And if there were no

other, this might suffice to comfort them,— that a revered and honored father has exchanged earth for heaven. Another faithful witness for the truth, faithful even unto death, has received his CROWN OF LIFE. His warfare is accomplished, and his victory won.

“ The pains of death are past ;
Labor and sorrow cease ;
And, life’s long warfare closed at last,
Thy soul is found in peace.
Soldier of Christ, well done !
Praise be thy new employ ;
And while eternal ages run,
Rest in thy Saviour’s joy !”